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Under the Dome, McKissick Museum Newsletter

McKissick Museum

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Fall 2011

# Under the Dome - Fall 2011

McKissick Museum--University of South Carolina

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# UNDER *the* DOME

*Telling the Story of Southern Life*

McKISSICK MUSEUM NEWSLETTER • Fall 2011

## Imaging the Invisible

Aug. 13–Dec. 11, 2011

North Gallery

Imaging the Invisible examines the ways that technology has changed the public's understanding of the non-visible world. From the adoption of the microscope for use in biology to current techniques for imaging atoms at the nanoscale, imaging technology has changed scientific research and how the general public grasps scientific findings.

More specifically, as imaging technology has progressed, it has created even more questions: Are scientific images faithful representations? Can we believe what we see through a microscope, through a camera lens, or underwater? What can we expect to learn when particles one-billionth of a meter in size are magnified? Is imaging science a steady march of progress? Do technological advances always result in the ability to image ever-smaller things? Imaging the Invisible is an exhibit that surveys particular instances in the history of imaging technology to question the changing meaning of representation in scientific imagery. Visitors are asked to consider the challenges scientists face in convincing others that the images the instruments produce are evidence of an unseen reality.

Several USC research projects will be highlighted within the exhibition, including work being done by the NanoCenter, the Department of Art, the A.C. Moore Herbarium, McKissick Museum and the School of Library and Information Science, and the South Carolina Institute of Anthropology and Archaeology and members of the Maritime Research Division.

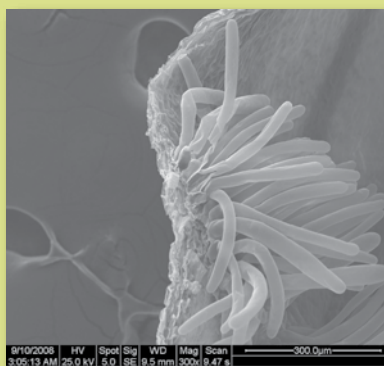
In conjunction with the exhibition, the University of South Carolina will host a conference, "The Public History of Science and Technology" Sept. 11–14, 2011. The conference includes an opening reception at McKissick Museum on Sunday, Sept. 11, from 4 to 6 p.m. To learn more and register for the conference, please visit [www.cas.sc.edu/hist/conf/phst/index.html](http://www.cas.sc.edu/hist/conf/phst/index.html).

Imaging the Invisible is based on work supported by the National Science Foundation (NSF Grant #SES-0531160).



*Top: Marie Tharp in her drafting room, from Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory*

*Right: Image of soft hair stomata of mint plant based on Dr. Nelson's research, USC Herbarium*





# Showing Your Mettle

SEPT. 24–DEC. 12, 2011 | SOUTH GALLERY

Juxtaposing the words “mettle” and “metal,” McKissick curators have mined the collection for a cross-section of metal objects that symbolize a person’s character. Showing Your Mettle invites visitors to see some of the museum’s hidden treasures while also considering how these objects are tied to a person’s identity. Featured objects include a Civil War mess kit, silver tea canister, dueling pistols, ceremonial swords, political memorabilia, coinage, awards, and medals cast in gold, silver, bronze and brass. The exhibition raises questions like “What kind of people owned or used these objects?” and “What do they say about the individual?” Visitors are encouraged to leave comments as to how they show their mettle, whether it be through materials collected for personal adornment or visual display.



United Confederate  
Veterans Delegate  
Badge, 1919



Civil War Mess Kit, Circa 1860s



Spartanburg Sesquicentennial commemorative medal



Gator Bowl medallion

## McKissick Digitizes with New Technology: Arius3D Scanner

Chess Schmidt, scanner tech, USC Imaging Center



Several years ago, Dr. Samantha Hastings of USC’s School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) approached McKissick Museum regarding a collaborative project to digitally scan the museum’s collections using new technology. The technology of an Arius3D scanner was at the center of these conversations. The laser scanner takes multiple digital images that when combined, or rasterized, create a three-dimensional image that allows the viewer to look at all sides of an object, not just the front and back. The images can be rotated and visually turned upside down. This technology increases visual access to certain types of information — maker and production marks that are often on the bottom of objects.

This summer, the Arius3D scanner arrived on campus. It is housed in the University of South Carolina Imaging Center, located on the second floor of McKissick Museum inside the North Gallery. Staff from Arius3D, based in Canada, came to Columbia in late June to train the SLIS and McKissick Museum collections’ staff on the proper use of the laser scanner. During the training, the staff tested the scanning capabilities on different types of materials — metals, ceramic and glass works, sweetgrass baskets, wooden objects, fossils, shells, and mineral specimens. Once our scanning projects get underway, the museum will feature examples on our Facebook page.





South Carolina Federation of Museums (SCFM) 2011 Christopher T. Loeblein Scholarship winner photo, left to right: SCFM president Christian Cicimurri, JoAnn Zeise, Sarah Scripps, Caitlin Podas, Rebecca Bush and Rodger Stroup, chair, SCFM Scholarship Committee

## NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

### Current Students

Rebecca Bush received the Elizabeth Perkins Fellowship in Museum Studies to intern at the Old York Historical Society, Maine.

Rebecca Bush and Anjuli Grantham presented the panel Beyond the Classroom: Engaging Students in Exhibition Development at the South Carolina Federation of Museums conference, Columbia, March 2011.

Anjuli Grantham has accepted a position as curator at the Baranov Museum in Kodiak, Alaska, beginning in September 2011.

Katie Walker was awarded the Young Professional Travel Fellowship from the American Association of Museums Registrars Committee to attend the American Association of Museums Annual Meeting in Houston, Texas, in May 2011.

JoAnn Zeise presented the poster Brick by Brick: Survey of the Horseshoe Wall at the University of South Carolina at the South Carolina Historic Preservation Conference, Columbia, March 2011. JoAnn was honored with a creative project award from the Institute for African American Research to support research into the historic Mitchelville Village, Hilton Head, S.C.

### Alumni News

In the spring, Edward Blessing accepted a position as an archivist with the South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.

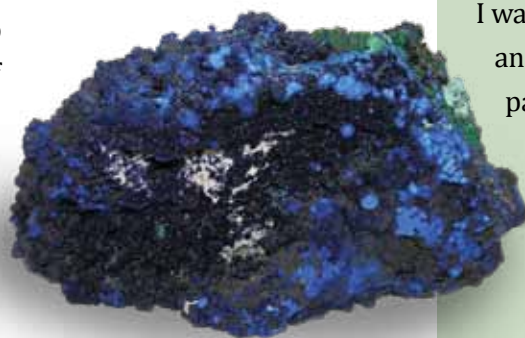
Ashley Bouknight began work in July as a curatorial assistant at The Hermitage, home of President Andrew Jackson, Nashville, Tenn.



## Museum Receives Federal Grant for Natural Science

McKissick Museum was recently awarded a \$149,734 Collections Stewardship grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. McKissick Museum was the only grant winner in South Carolina this year. With the award, the museum will begin a two-year project to inventory and recatalog the minerals and fossils in its natural science collection. The museum's holdings contain significant local and regional geology collections, including minerals, rocks and fossils (invertebrate, vertebrate and paleobotanic specimens), as well as other significant specimens from around the world.

The grant will allow McKissick Museum to hire additional staff to work with the chief curator of collections and research, Jill Koverman, and the curator of natural science, Dr. Kajal Ghoshroy, on the inventory and cataloging of 400 drawers of specimens.



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

# What's New at McKissick?

Please join me in welcoming Benjamin Salata and Mark Smith as the newest members of McKissick's program staff. Ben's keen interest in historic preservation and reenactment are sure to put the visitor front and center in exhibition planning and design. Meanwhile, Mark's seasoned community outreach experience in other professional settings is already reshaping our audience engagement strategies. Together, Ben and Mark's presence no doubt will translate into a heightened public impact and presence for McKissick's exhibits and programs in the coming year.

In addition to adding new staff, McKissick has just acquired a rare, 19th-century ceramic jug — one of just three known vessels with an incised figurative image from Edgefield District — for its permanent collection of Southeastern pottery. This particular vessel had been documented and studied by McKissick staff two decades ago. Incised with an image of what appears to be a man tipping his hat, as well as with what seems to be randomly arranged numbers and letters, this jug situates the work of Edgefield potters within the larger context of 19th-century figurative traditions in the decorative and fine arts. The vessel also offers opportunities to explore how the pots incised with names, dates and poems that were pioneered by enslaved African-American potter David Drake may have inspired other Edgefield potters to experiment with activating utilitarian vessels as a powerful means of visual and narrative communication.

What's not so immediately obvious, but nonetheless important to the museum's future, are the new ways that McKissick's staff and Advisory Council members are working together. The staff and council have stepped up to the challenge of new program planning, marketing and fund development processes. Individually and collectively, they have helped me identify potential new partners on campus and in the community. New partnerships will be key to building relationships with new audiences. And it's these new audiences we aim to nurture as the stakeholders who will ensure the museum's ability to deliver on its mission long-term.

I want to thank my talented and hard-working staff and an incredibly dedicated Advisory Council for the patience and openness they have shown during this time of transition. Every day I am heartened by what seems possible at McKissick.

Jane Przybysz, Ph.D., Executive Director

# Telling the Story of Southern Life ...

## Community, Culture, and the Environment



The McKissick Museum is located at the head of the University of South Carolina's historic Horseshoe in the heart of campus. All exhibitions are free and open to the public.

Gallery hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The museum is open from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays. McKissick is closed on Sundays. Metered parking is available on all adjacent streets and in the lower level of Pendleton Street Garage.

A number of volunteer opportunities are available at the McKissick Museum. Call 803-777-7251 for information on membership, tours, programs and exhibits. Visit us on the Internet at [www.cas.sc.edu/mcks](http://www.cas.sc.edu/mcks).

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## exhibitions, events, and activities

### The Ultimate Vacation: Watching Other People Work

**JAN. 28–MAY 4, 2012 | SOUTH GALLERY**

Ever wondered how things were made? Would you like to go behind the scenes like Charlie on his famous trip to the chocolate factory, or would you rather enjoy taking a virtual tour from the comfort of your own home? The Ultimate Vacation: Watching Other People Work gives a snapshot of the history of factory tours by exploring companies such as Hershey, Heinz, Sears and BMW. The exhibit will challenge visitors to think about how consumer goods are manufactured, how business practices and labor relations change over time, and how corporate public relations offices and national advertising influence our buying patterns.

The Ultimate Vacation is guest curated by Dr. Allison Marsh, an assistant professor of history, and is the subject of her current book project. "Factory tours have been around for centuries, with breweries, mines and textiles being among the oldest," Marsh said. "The heyday, though, was in the early 20th century, a time of great change for middle-class America: the weekend had been born; transportation and hotel networks were developing; foods and other goods were no longer being produced locally; and America was proud to show its manufacturing might."

### Upcoming Events

#### Imaging the Invisible

Aug. 13–Dec. 11, 2011

#### Showing Your Mettle

Sept. 10–Dec. 12, 2011

#### The Nature of Things with Rudy Mancke — Fall

Sept. 20, 2011

#### The Nature of Things with Rudy Mancke — Winter

Dec. 20, 2011

#### The Ultimate Vacation: Watching Other People Work

Jan. 28–May 4, 2012

#### Fall Reception

Sept. 11, 2011

#### 2012 Folk Heritage Award Nomination Deadline

Jan. 12, 2012

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